25th February 1929]

Alleged contracts in recruiting labourers to Assam and Bengal Tea estates from the Agency tracts.

* 1445-B Q.—Sriman Biswanath Das Mahasayo: Will the hon. the Home Member be pleased to state—

(a) whether the Government are aware of the existence of a 'civil contract' in Assam and Bengal Tea estates by which the system of labour recruitments is perpetually kept on by means of annual contracts;

(b) what the conditions of those contracts are;

(c) the Act or the rules under which recruitment for the Tea gardens of Dooars, Terai, Tipperah, Darjeeling and Chittagong are made; and

(d) the number of absconders (labourers) that have been reported in each of the years 1925, 1926, 1927 and 1928, from the Tea districts of Assam and those of Bengal separately?

A.—(a), (b) & (c) There is no labour contract in regard to recruitment to the labour districts in Assam. The Government have no information regarding the Tea estates in Bengal, recruitment to which is not controlled by any law.

(d) The Government have no information.

Sriman Biswanath Das Mahasayo:—"The reply given to clauses (a), (b) and (c) is 'there is no labour contract'. May I know whether the Government are aware there is such a thing called 'Civil contract'?"

The hon. the President:—"The hon. Member must take another opportunity for giving his information."

Sriman Biswanath Das Mahasayo:—"Now, on the basis of the information I have now given, may I ask whether the Government would enquire into the existence of a 'Civil contract' in Assam and Bengal Tea estates?"

The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir Muhammad Usman Sahib Bahadur:—"Notice, Sir."

Mr. Basheer Ahmad Sayeed:—"Will the Government seek to make any difference between civil contract and labour contract?"

The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir Muhammad Usman Sahib Bahadur:—"Notice, Sir."

Mr. S. Satyamurti:—"May I know whether, in view of the fact that recruitment to various tea estates is admitted by the Government, there is any law which governs it and whether the Government have any intention of bringing such recruitment under control?"

Newspapers

Newspapers publishing Government advertisements.

* 1446 Q.—Mr. K. V. R. Swami: Will the hon. the Home Member be pleased to state—

(a) the names of the newspapers to which Government advertisements were given in each of the years from 1920 to 1927; and

(b) whether such advertisements are given without any distinction either political or otherwise?

A.—(a) The Government have no information.

(b) Yes.

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Mr. K. V. R. Swami :—" May I know whether the Government are aware in which newspapers their advertisements are appearing ? "

The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir Muhammad Usman Sahib Bahadur :—" Our policy is to give advertisements to papers without making any distinction on political grounds."

Mr. K. V. R. Swami :—" I am not asking about the policy of the Government in giving advertisements to newspapers. I am simply asking whether the Government know the newspapers in which their advertisements are published."

11-30 a.m. The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir Muhammad Usman Sahib Bahadur :—" The Government have no information ; we can get the information from the Heads of Departments, but it would involve a good deal of labour."

Mr. A. Ranganatha Mudaliyar :—" May I ask if there is a list of papers to which advertisements should not be sent ? "

The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir Muahmmad Usman Sahib Bahadur :—" No, Sir."

Mr. G. Harisarvottama Rao :—" May I know, Sir, if the Government do not exercise any control over the Heads of Departments with regard to the choice of papers in which Government advertisements are to be published ? "

The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir Muhammad Usman Sahib Bahadur :—" No, Sir."

Mr. A. Kaleswara Rao :—" May I know, Sir, whether the distinction of co-operating and non-co-operating papers is still maintained by the Government ? "

The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir Muhammad Usman Sahib Bahadur :—" No, Sir. "

Mr. R. Nagan Gowda :—" May I ask whether the advertisements are sent to all papers ? "

The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir Muhammad Usman Sahib Bahadur :—" I think so, Sir. I have already stated that no distinction is made on political grounds."

Mr. K. Madhavan Nayar :—" The Government say, in clause (*a*), that they have no information and in clause (*b*) that advertisements are given without any distinction either political or otherwise ? May I know on what information the Government have given answer to clause (*b*) ?"

The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir Muhammad Usman Sahib Bahadur :—" The Government have passed orders to that effect."

Mr. S. Satyamurti :—" May I ask whether *Swarajya* is one of the papers to which advertisements are being regularly sent ? "

The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir Muhammad Usman Sahib Bahadur :—" It is not possible to answer the question now."